

## **Ward 6 NPA, Sept 2, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Public Comment: none

Ad-Hoc Redistricting Committee: Rama Kocherlakota selected to participate.

### **Martha Keenan, City of Burlington Capital Plan:**

Updates on city improvements including streets, sidewalks and parks; building security enhancements; computer hardware/software upgrades; public safety projects. Committees were set up to make sure investments were equitable across the City's assets. Software developed to inventory City assets to better manage, prioritize and understand needs. Process is ongoing and will take decades to catch up. There is a funding gap of \$80 million to cover City infrastructure improvements. City will come to voters to cover costs that are not generated from grants and other funding sources which is approximately \$30 million. Future savings to city may include reducing fire stations from five to four and consolidated recycling and trash collection. City now has a debt cap to maintain our bond rating and not accrue excessive debt.

Questions: what portion of the City's budget is the capital plan?; are there funds going towards infrastructure needs? Did the City receive funds to help with costs for Covid safety measures?

### **Jadah Bearden, Public Recycling and Trash Receptacles**

There is a lack of trash bins and receptacles in the City. They are only in the parks. They are not near bus stops or near vendors. They estimate that the City needs approximately 50 trash and recycling bins. They want to bring this need to the attention of the City Council. This is about safety, beauty and health. Funds to cover could be generated from a Go Fund Me.

### **Sandy Yusen, Champlain College**

Fall semester is off and running with full in-person learning and living. The health and safety of the community is the highest priority. Covid protocols are on the website. There is an indoor masking requirement and students must be fully vaccinated. Covid testing was required before students arrived. Employees are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. Exemption exists for medical reasons.

### **ANew Place and Homelessness Panel**

Kevin Pounds: Cold weather will open community space during day, 11/15-4/15.

Matt Grady: Frequent meetings?

Kevin Pounds: Doing monthly meetings, but getting low attendance. Incidents tend to increase attendance.

Question: Are there any site upgrade updates for the Champlain Inn? (Picnic table, redesign of front parking lot)?

Kevin Pounds: More complicated because involves regrading parking lot. Beginning of spring construction.

AB: Interested in your perspective since access to hotels are ending. Are more people seeking access to ANEW place?

Kevin Pounds: Yes traffic is increasing. Turning people away. Sometimes advise people not to come since they might get stuck if no beds available.

Lacey-Ann Smith: Social worker working out of BPD. Relocating 15 people living in parks just during summer 2021. Only 21 total in 2019. Not eligible for motel. Narrowing eligibility in coming months. Trying to delay, but likely to continue through winter.

Paul Dragon: CVOEO runs emergency food relief, housing assistance for Chittenden, Addison, Franklin, and Grand Isle counties. Ran Holiday Inn for State of VT during pandemic. ~160 people experiencing homelessness. Ended this summer. 30 left without payments, another housing option. Seeing an increase in street homelessness. Grant for 3 outreach workers. Bringing meals to Sears Lane, outreach for essential needs.

Jan-end of April 2021 ran Community Resource Center: 10,000 meals, use computers, get connected to resources. Funding dried up. Unsuccessful application for grant to continue year round. Not a night solution.

420 subsidized housing vouchers available. About 300 used. Need more affordable housing stock to get people out of congregate housing. State and community issue. Need systemic solution. Applying for a grant for outreach van. Access to computers, apply for housing, meals... Landlord liaison to help expand access to subsidized house.

Michael Monte: Champlain Housing Trust. Built 68 apartments, 1500 applications for affordable housing. not able to meet current need. 300 folks in hotels/motels on Shelburne Rd, including ANEW Place. Another facility for COVID quarantining. In process of setting up another 96 apartments in 2 locations, such as former St. Mike's dorms. ~200 apartments available in next year. Also used for low income individuals/households. Working with VFW for homeless vets. Total about 550 units. Hired developers. Mostly housing, some services.

Question: Describe trend towards motel conversion.

Michael Monte: Have done about 8. Faster than a permitting process. Half the price to develop. Can stretch resources further. Willing buyers, willing sellers, prices often based on appraisers. Many motels experiencing lower traffic.

Question: If you had a magic wand, what would you do for housing? Anything besides money?

Lacey-Ann Smith: CHT addressed part of Lacey-Ann's magic wand. Green space for people that need ability to camp, a place to camp.

Kevin Pounds: 2 things: Not wanting to expand housing. More affordable housing and more support for people in that housing.

Daytime warming space/shelter, getting them out of hotel rooms/alleys/tents creates community, place for people to connect to services better.

Paul Dragon: Permanent support of housing. Robust street outreach.

Michael Monte: More money. Fix broken healthcare system. Most people need mental health services. Connect people with support they need to stay in their houses.

### **South End Construction Coordination Plan, DPW Staff**

Norm Baldwin: Projects in South End—railyard enterprise project, paving, Shelburne St. Roundabout, Champlain Parkway, and Main St. are disruptive. People have construction fatigue.

Corey Mims: Railyard enterprise project; memo went to board of finance and will go to City Council. Projects in South End will take a long time and have a high impact on residents. Allowing for Champlain Parkway between Home and Lakeside Avenues is in first phase starting in 2022 and completing in 2024. Planning for minimal impacts for neighbors. Additional improvements in South End will progress with second phase of Champlain Parkway. Construction will be phased/staged for minimal impacts.

Norm: Shelburne St. Roundabout and Champlain Parkway will be coordinated to reduce impacts based on feedback from the public. The City Council has control of contracts being released for construction. State and federal partners with DPW have approved the Champlain Parkway phasing.

Questions: What is the Railyard Enterprise Project? Will train service be available in 2023? What is your confidence that Parkway construction will commence in 2022?